

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The method pursuant to claim 12~~ A method for producing a ball cage, the method comprising:

machining a functional area of a ball cage blank with an uninterrupted cut, wherein before the machining, the functional area is elevated as compared to an adjacent surface of the ball cage blank; and

hardening the ball cage blank before the machining the functional area, wherein the machining is hard-turning.

14. (Currently Amended) The method pursuant to claim ~~11~~13, wherein, after the machining, the functional area ~~are is~~ is elevated as compared to the adjacent surface.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The method pursuant to claim 11~~ A method for producing a ball cage, the method comprising:

machining a functional area of a ball cage blank with an uninterrupted cut, wherein before the machining, the functional area is elevated as compared to an adjacent surface of the ball cage blank, wherein, after the machining, the functional area is a same level as compared to the adjacent surface.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~The method pursuant to claim 11~~ A method for producing a ball cage, the method comprising:

machining a functional area of a ball cage blank with an uninterrupted cut, wherein before the machining, the functional area is elevated as compared to an adjacent surface of the ball cage blank, further comprising forming the ball cage blank by a rolling process.

17. (Currently Amended) The method pursuant to claim ~~11~~13, further comprising stamping window-type ball pockets.

18. (New) The method pursuant to claim 15, further comprising stamping ball pockets.

19. (New) The method pursuant to claim 16, further comprising stamping ball pockets.

20. (New) The method pursuant to claim 13, forming the ball cage blank by a rolling process.

21. (New) The method pursuant to claim 15, forming the ball cage blank by a rolling process.

22. (New) The method pursuant to claim 15, wherein the machining is hard-turning.

23. (New) The method pursuant to claim 16, wherein the machining is hard-turning.

23. (New) The method pursuant to claim 13, wherein, after the machining, the functional area is a same level as compared to the adjacent surface.

24. (New) The method pursuant to claim 16, wherein, after the machining, the functional area is a same level as compared to the adjacent surface.

25. (New) The method pursuant to claim 15, wherein, after the machining, the functional area is elevated as compared to a second adjacent surface.

26. (New) The method pursuant to claim 16, wherein, after the machining, the functional area is elevated as compared to the adjacent surface.